

NOTE ON COLONEL McMASTER'S LIST OF BIRDS FROM NAGPORE &c.,—
by W. T. BLANFORD.

The occurrence of several Malabar birds at Chikalda in the Gawilgarh hills is a very interesting circumstance, as it adds an instance to those already known in which animals with decidedly Malay affinities are met with on isolated hills in India, while they are wanting in the surrounding lowlands. Whether the cause of this circumstance be climatic, and due to the greater dampness of these hill tops, I cannot say, probably it may be; but it is also probable that the animals, thus found isolated, once inhabited the plains of India, and were driven by a change in the climate (which may have been in its turn caused partly by the destruction of the forests), to take refuge on the hills, their place in the lowlands being supplied, in part at least, by the numerous desert types which are spread over the Indian plains, such amongst the birds as *Neophron*, *Aquila fulvescens*, *Pterocles exustus*, *Ammomanes phenicurus* and *Pyrrhulauda grisea*. That the hill birds have not migrated from other regions, but have really occupied the intervening country at one time, is rendered probable by the circumstance that animals incapable of traversing long distances, such as ground snakes (*Uropeltidae*), and land shells, have the same peculiar distribution, and the same is the case, to some extent at least, with plants.

The Malabar forms mentioned in Col. McMaster's notes as found at Chikalda are *Brachypternus chrysonotus*, *Ochromela nigrorufa*, *Myiophonus Horsfieldii*, *Hypsipetes Ganeesa*, *Phyllornis Malabarica*, and *Dendrocitta leucogastra*. *Otocompsa jocosus* (? *O. fuscicaudata*) and *Merula nigropileus* too, are not, so far as I am aware, found in the plains of Berar and the Central Provinces.

It is very desirable to learn to what extent any of these Malabar forms occur at Pachmari and on Mount Abú. A Malabar fauna has been found on several hills in Southern India. My brother and I ten years ago* called attention to the occurrence of land shells of Nilgiri species on the Shevroy, Kolamully, Patchamully and Kalryenmully hills, and on one or two minor peaks.

* J. A. S. B., xxx, p. 365.

